



**Minds of the Future
Academy**

Parent Handbook

Minds of the Future Academy, Inc. Parent Handbook and Agreement Form

Dear Parents,

Please read each section, initial and return this agreement form to the Director or Assistant Director after reading the handbook.

___ 1. I hereby agree to the general policies and procedures of Minds of the Future Academy regarding tuition and fees, attendance, drop-off by 9:00a.m., late pick up fees, and non-payment by close of business on Friday, and other items specified in the Parent Handbook. I am aware of the scheduled preschool holidays. (Not applicable to VPK Only Students)

___ 2. I understand that the registration fee and supply fee, is non-refundable. I understand that if I dis-enroll my child and return to Minds of the Future Academy the same year, I am obligated to repay the registration fee and the supplies fee upon reenrollment. If a child does not attend Minds of the Future Academy, all fees are non-refundable. (Not applicable to VPK Only Students).

___ 3. I have read and understand the Safety/Emergency Procedures, which will be followed in the event of an accident while my child is attending Minds of the Future Academy. I hereby authorize Minds of the Future Academy to take appropriate emergency action for the safety of my child.

___ 4. I have read and understand the Health Policy of Minds of the Future Academy, Inc. I also understand the requirement for written authorization for medication to be administered to my child and it must be updated weekly to continue medications. If my child has allergies, I understand that I am to provide Benadryl and any other allergy medicine my child may need. I further understand that I am required to fill out a medication release form that will be kept on site anytime I bring medicine to be dispensed by the staff whether it is prescription or over-the-counter medication.

___ 5. I have read and understand the Discipline Policy of Minds of the Future Academy, Inc. I understand that if my child exhibits behavior that may harm him/her or others, I will have to keep my child out 24 hours before he/she can return to the center.

___ 6. I hereby agree to notify Minds of the Future Academy, Inc. **two weeks in advance of withdrawal, should such an event occur, or pay the difference.** If a two-week notice is turned in on Monday or Tuesday of the week, I can use that week as one of the last two weeks. If the notice is given on Wednesday, Thursday or Friday, the week will not count towards my last two weeks.

___ 7. I understand the policy concerning the consent to photograph and/or videotape my child. (Digital Communication Consent).

___ 8. I understand DCF requirements pertaining to my child's immunization and/or physical forms and my obligations to keep these forms current or pay possible fees or fines for non-compliance.

___ 9. I also understand that tuition is still owed during holiday weeks and will accrue the same late fees as other weeks.

___ 10. I understand that Minds of the Future Academy, Inc. is a non-smoking facility.

___ 11. I understand that Minds of the Future Academy, Inc. reserves the right to disenroll my child at any time. No notice is required to be given.

I acknowledge that I have reviewed and understand the Minds of the Future Academy, Inc. Parent Handbook. By signing this form, I understand that it is my responsibility to review the handbook and abide by all policies set forth by Minds of the Future Academy, Inc. Any revisions will be posted on our website.

Child's Name (printed) _____

Parent's Name (printed) _____

Parent Signature _____ **Date** _____

Director's Initials _____ **Date** _____

Welcome Letter to Parents

Dear Parents,

Welcome to Minds of the Future Academy, Inc. We are so happy that you have chosen our academy and we would like to assure you that we are committed to assisting your child in reaching his or her goals with a smile. Our primary focus is to help prepare your child for school and life in a nurturing and loving environment. We pride ourselves in providing quality care in a safe environment. Our commitment is creating a community of learners that value each others opinions, differences, and creativity.

Creating a stimulating and exciting learning environment is our goal. This handbook was designed to provide parents with information explaining our policies and procedures. This handbook is designed to assist you in an easy transition and help you feel more confident in your family's adjustment into our program. Please keep this handbook for your reference throughout the school year. If you have any questions, comments, or suggestions please feel free to call or stop by.

We look forward to working with you and your child, and reaching our goals by preparing the minds for a brighter future!

Thank you,

Cynthia Smith,

Philosophy

It is our belief at Minds of the Future Academy, Inc. that every child can learn. Our goal is an ongoing commitment to helping each child succeed academically, socially, emotionally, and mentally in life. We believe that parents are our students first teachers; therefore we will strive to create a partnership and bond with the parents to assist our students in becoming model citizens.

Mission

At Minds of the Future Academy, our primary concern is to provide quality child care services at an affordable price to families with young children. We are proud of the contribution that each member of our staff makes in providing a safe and happy environment where young children are able to grow in mind, body, and spirit.

Minds of the Future Academy, offers the opportunity for each child to develop physically, socially and cognitively according to their individual learning style. Each child is considered unique in temperament and rate of development. Curriculum is planned to enhance and challenge particular, distinct individual needs, interests and abilities. Activities and relationships occur in a healthy, positive and relaxed environment in which well-qualified staff provide personal attention, guidance and nurturing to each child.

The Academy will strive to maintain continuity and consistency throughout the program by conducting cooperative staff planning, training and a variety of joint activities involving the various groups of children. In this context, all caregivers at Minds of the Future Academy are encouraged to express their individual educational strengths as they work with children and in their cooperative efforts with other staff members.

When you come to “Minds of the Future Academy”, your child will receive the best care the industry has to offer.

Open Door Policy

It is our policy at Minds of the Future Academy, Inc. to maintain an open door policy with all parents of enrolled children. Parents will have immediate access without prior notice to the academy as long as their presence does not effect other children placed in our care. In situations where there is custody or domestic issues the following will apply:

- The academy must be provided with the most recent certified copy of court orders and any amendments to the order, i.e. custody order, restraining order, or a protection order from abuse.
- The academy will follow the orders of the court. Deviations from the court will only be made if there are written instructions from signatures).
- If there is not a copy of a court order or a copy has not been provided to the academy, then both parents will have equal access to their child. By law the academy may not deny access to the child by either parent without a court order.
- If there is a verbal or physical conflict at the center, we will contact the police.

Registration & Supply Fee

The following fees are due upon enrollment: Registration fee, Tech and annual supply fee per child. These fees are non-refundable. I understand that if I disenroll and decide to re-enroll, that the above fees are used to hold my child(s) enrollment and are non-refundable if the child(ren) does not attend. These fees are due by the first Friday of the enrollment week.

Enrollment

For your child's safety and to comply with state regulations, all health forms and enrollment papers must be completed and on file at the Academy prior to your child's first day of attendance. The following items must be submitted at the time of enrollment.

- Form 3040 - physical examination
- Form 680 or 681 -immunization record
- Minds of the Future Academy, Inc. Enrollment Form

- One time Registration Fee (non-refundable)
- Annual Supply Fee (non-refundable)
- School Readiness and/or VPK certificates
- DCF forms
- One Week's Full Tuition Payment (Non-Refundable)

Minds of the Future Academy, Inc. does not discriminate in regard to religion, sex, national or ethnic origin in our admission policies.

Needed Items

- (Pull-Ups or Training Pants), blanket and change of clothing
- Three and Four Year Olds: Blanket and change of clothing
 - All blankets must go home on Fridays to be laundered and returned on Monday
 - Ensure that your child's first and last name is on all of their belongings.

Immunizations/Physical Requirements

Each child is required by the Department of Children and Families to have on file a Physical Examination (Form 3040 and Immunization Record (Form 680). **You have 30 days after enrollment to bring in these forms Per DCF requirements.** Any child who does not have the proper medical forms on file will not be allowed to attend until forms are on file and current.

If you schedule an appointment for immunizations or a physical, we must have an appointment card or letter from the physician to place in your child's file for the DCF inspector. DCF will fine the center \$25.00 each day the form has expired. Minds of the Future Academy, Inc. reserves the right to impose these fees to the parent for non-compliance.

Tuition Policy

Tuition fees are due and payable on Friday the week prior to childcare services. If payment is not made on Friday, a \$35.00 late fee will be added on Monday and a \$5.00 a day late fee for every day after until fee is paid in full. Fees are based on reserved time and not on actual time that a child spends at the center.

All fees are assessed per the above tuition rate chart. Your child's tuition rate is based on their age as of August 1. Tuition fees will not be reduced on your child's birthday. A price reduction will be given during the school year only if your child moves from one room(level) to another.

Minds of the Future Academy offers a discount of 10% per family for families with more than one child enrolling full-time in our school.

All families will receive a statement of your account by January 31 for the previous year, as long as your account is paid in full per Minds of the Future Academy policy.

School Readiness/VPK

Parents who miss more than the allotted three (3) days a month, per the VPK contracts, will be held responsible for any days that are not reimbursed to Minds of the Future Academy, Inc. A doctor's note is required for return for absences over 3 days.

Late Pick-Up Charge

Parents who pick-up their child after the regular closing time (6:00p.m.) will be charged a late fee of \$35.00 per child for each 15 minute interval. Late charges will be due the next day (there will be no exceptions). The parent will be asked to sign a late pick-up form acknowledging that the child was picked up late and that the late fee is due. If this becomes an ongoing problem, then you will be asked to find another center that can accommodate your needs.

Checks

Personal Checks will not be accepted.

Soliciting

No soliciting will be allowed at Minds of the Future Academy, especially soliciting for other childcare options (example another childcare provider, babysitter, nanny, etc.) Minds of the Future Academy reserves the right to disenroll or not allow to reenroll if soliciting has happened in the academy.

Drop Off Policy

All children should arrive in their class by 9:00a.m. **This will ensure that your child gets the best learning experience for their day and minimize interruptions to others .**

VPK students will have to be dropped off just before 8:30, which is the starting time for their class (review VPK Contract). NO child will be able to enter class once it has started per the VPK contract. If your child has an appointment, a physicians note must accompany their return to school. Please give a courtesy call to the academy to let us know.

Holidays

Our academy is closed for the following holidays; observed on the day of the holiday or the preceding Friday or following Monday, should the holiday fall on the weekend: New Year's Day, Dr. Martin Luther King's Birthday, President's Day, Good Friday, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day and the day after, and Christmas Day and the day after. **No allowance for tuition will be made due to holiday closings.**

Vacation or Occasional Absences

No refunds shall be made for sick days or absences. Refund, credits or make-up days cannot be granted. If your child is sick for more than two days, please call the academy to let us know. It is helpful to the center and teachers to know if a child will be out more than two days. Any families in the School Readiness or ELC/Enrichment program must submit a physician's note after three (3) days absence. School Readiness will not accept hand-written notices from parents for reimbursement purposes. A physician's note must be submitted for VPK and School Readiness parents.

DAILY SIGN-IN/OUT

A daily sign-in/out notebook is located on the front counter in the foyer. Please make sure that you sign your child in and out on a daily basis. The time your child is dropped off and picked up, along with your signature, should be entered on your child's sheet. If a VPK (Enrichment) or School Readiness parent does not sign in or out per the requirements, then they will be held responsible for days to reimburse Minds of the Future Academy, Inc. VPK Only students will be charged per the non-instructional guideline in the VPK Only Contract.

RELEASE OF CHILD

Children will be released only to those persons whose names are listed on the child's enrollment form. Parents must give notice to the Director or Assistant Director if someone else will be picking up your child. Any such persons picking up any child will have to show their picture ID at the front office. This is for your child's safety. You must be 18 years of age or older, in order for Minds of the Future Academy, Inc. to release the child.

If a parent or authorized adult appears to be under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs, the staff will attempt to contact the other parent or authorized adult on the pick-up list. Minds of the Future Academy, Inc. does not have the right to deny the parent access to their child, but the staff will contact the police immediately if the academy is not able to contact another parent or authorized adult to pick-up the child.

VPK ONLY & VPK Enrichment

All children who wish to enroll in our VPK program will be required by the state to register with the Early Learning Coalition. You will have to obtain a certificate of eligibility to enroll in the VPK program. Families will also be required to sign a VPK contract to ensure that guidelines and policies are followed in the VPK program. Please remember the State, ELC will only allow one (1) transfer per school year. ELC requires a pretest and posttest for each student.

Quarterly Newsletter

You will receive a newsletter each quarter. The newsletter will include curriculum topics and scheduled events in the classroom. The newsletter also includes special instructions for your child's daily involvement in the preschool program. Check your child's folder daily for any important papers or class work they may have done. Remember to review the parent board in the foyer for announcements and to view your child's work.

ILLNESS POLICY

Please keep your child home if he or she displays any of the following symptoms:

1. A fever of 100.5 degrees or more, or has had a fever in the past 24 hour period.
2. A constant cough, wheezing, nasal discharge, sneezing, vomiting or diarrhea. The Director's discretion will be used in cases of vomiting.
3. A communicable disease. A communicable disease will have some or all of the following symptoms: sniffles, reddened eyes with a discharge, sore throat, headache and abdominal pain, accompanied by a fever. Please notify the Director immediately if your child

does have a communicable disease. Your child must be on antibiotics for 24 hours (or had 3 dosages) before coming back to the academy.

4. Redness of the eyelids accompanied by a discharge (pink eye).
5. Severe itching of body or scalp (lice). There must be no sign of nits for your child to return to school.
6. Sore throat.
7. Unusual spots or rashes.
8. Mouth sores with drooling.

A phone call to let us know why your child is absent would be appreciated. Children with a fever cannot return to our academy until 24 hours after the fever is less than 99 degrees. Children with diarrhea cannot return to our academy until they have had a normal bowel movement. If your child has one diarrhea bowel movement during the day, we will make a courtesy call to let you know. After the second diarrhea bowel movement, you will be asked to pick up your child.

Children with a serious illness will not be allowed to enter the academy without a physician's approval (must be in writing). Minds of the Future Academy Inc. reserves the right to override a physician's note if your child still exhibits some of the above symptoms; the parent will be called to come and pick up their child.

Should your child become ill during the day, you will be notified as soon as possible. Parents are required to promptly (30 minutes) pick-up their child from the center. Parents that are unable to pick-up their child in a timely manner, will need to have an authorized person on your child's enrollment form come pick-up your child. It is your responsibility as a parent to update your enrollment form if needed. In the event of a serious illness or injury and we are unable to contact you or any person listed on your enrollment form, at the discretion of the Director or Co-Director, the paramedics will be called and your child will be transported to an emergency facility.

Parents are requested to notify the Academy Director if their child has a communicable disease so that parents of children in the classroom/academy may be notified. Only information about the communicable disease will be shared. The academy will follow the Confidentiality Policy and Procedures.

Daily Health Checks are made on each child upon their arrival. If a child shows visible signs of being ill, at anytime during the day, the parents will be called to pick-up their child. There is no tuition break due to illnesses. We will notify you of any outbreaks in the classrooms verbally.

Lice

A child identified as having head lice shall not be permitted to return until the following day (24 hours) and only provided that treatment has occurred and has been verified. Verification of treatment may include a product box, box top, or empty bottle.

Medication

A physician must prescribe all medication given to a child at the academy. Parents are required to fill out a medication release authorization form. All medication must be in the original container, indicating the child's name, type and date of prescribed medication, amount and time of dosage and the length of time medication is to be distributed. These forms must be updated EVERY MONDAY.

All medication will be kept in the reception office. No over-the-counter medication will be given, unless a written physician's prescription is presented with the medication. Again, the correct dosage and time of medication must be on the physician's prescription. It is the responsibility of the parent to pick-up the medication from the front office. Any expired medication that is not picked up by the expiration date will be discarded. If any medication is kept at the center on an as needed basis, such as nebulizers, the form is valid for only six (6) months and a new form must be filled out when expired.

Any child that has severe allergies must have an epi-pen and Benadryl on site. Medical release forms must be on site with the epi-pen and Benadryl with a physician's note.

Special Requests

Parents must follow the policy for administering medication if the child is to receive medication during the day. This should be taken care of during arrival time.

Parents are requested to notify the teacher or Director if there are any special needs or instructions for the child's day. Special requests must be submitted in writing and may include, but are not limited to health issues, family situations, alternative pick up person, early pick up time, or any other issues the center should be aware of to best meet the early pick up time, or any other issues the academy should be aware of to best meet the individual needs of the child. Discretion by Director may be used based on the circumstance.

Biting Policy

In order to provide the best possible care for all the children here at our academy, we have implemented a Biting Policy. The parents will be notified when their child has bitten another child. One teacher will shadow the child trying to avoid another biting incident from happening. If the child bites again during the same day, we will contact the parent to come and pick-up the child from the academy. After the child has bitten three times in a day or it becomes an ongoing problem, our academy reserves the right to withdraw your child at any time without notice.

Clothing

Please dress your child in comfortable play clothing. Your child will participate in a variety of different activities throughout their day. Clothing should be durable and washable. Straps or complicated buttons, slippers and belts that cause frustration must be avoided. If one-piece outfits are worn, the children must be able to get in and out of them by themselves. Comfortable shoes that provide protection should be worn;

closed toe shoes with rubber soles that are securely tied or fastened (tennis shoes, sneakers). Please no dress shoes or “flip-flops”. Dress your child in season appropriate clothing. All jackets, sweaters, and coats should be labeled with your child’s first and last name in permanent marker. We will not be responsible for unmarked clothes. You will be asked to supply a complete set of extra clothing (shorts or pants, shirt, socks, underwear and shoes). We suggest that the clothing be placed in a clear Ziploc bag with your child’s first and last name on the bag.

Nap and Rest Time

After lunch, a nap/rest time will be required for all preschool children. Parents will need to furnish a small blanket with your child’s first and last name on it. Your child’s blanket will go home on Thursdays or Fridays to be washed and returned on the following Monday. See the Director for details on your child’s day to bring home their blanket.

Birthday Parties

Birthday celebrations are welcomed! The cupcakes or birthday cake must be store bought. Utensils associated with the party must be provided by the parent. Please check with the teacher or director for the number of students in your child class.

Staff

Every effort is made to hire the most qualified people to help your child reach their full potential. References are checked on every employee; all state standards are met and exceeded. At any time, there is a concern about the staff please feel free to speak with the director about any concerns.

Digital Communication Consent

Minds of the Future Academy publishes a variety of information about our centers via the web and other digital communication platforms. From time to time we may wish to include your child’s work and/or photo on our web site, bulletin boards, newsletter, fliers, or in our graduation

video or other forms of communication. No names will be used and photos will only be used generically. No identifying marks or physical marks or physical characteristics, clothing or articles bearing a student's name or any other means by which a student can be identified will be photographed. No other personal information about the student will be published on the web site, bulletin boards, newsletters fliers, or other forms of communication. We may also videotape and will occasionally use portions of the video for educational purposes.

Divorce and Custodial Rights

Minds of the Future Academy understands that some families have shared parental responsibilities. If there are any circumstances that are pertinent to one or the other parent, a court order **MUST** be on file. Minds of the Future Academy will comply with any court order for a family in our care.

Emergency Closing Policy

In the event that an emergency arises which makes it necessary to close the center, parents will be notified as quickly as possible. We will always do our best not to close on unplanned days but nature has a way of changing our schedule sometimes! No allowance for tuition will be notified as quickly as possible. No allowance for tuition will be made for such an occurrence. We ask you to call our voice mail for updated information.

Withdrawal

A two-week notice is required when withdrawing your child from our center. If a request is received on Monday or Tuesday, this will count as the first week of your notice. No verbal communication will be used for the two-week notice.

Parent Involvement

Minds of the Future Academy, Inc. has an open door policy with all parents of enrolled children. Parents are not only welcomed, but also highly encouraged to volunteer in their child's classroom. Siblings of children in the program may not attend when a parent is volunteering in the classroom.

All visitors are required to sign in at the front desk before proceeding to the classroom. The Discipline Policy, standards of conduct, and visitor policies will apply to all volunteers at all times.

Minds of the Future Academy

Attendance Policy

- Minds of the Future does have a cut-off time, to bring your child, which is 9:00 a.m., unless you have a doctor's note. If you are going to be after 9:00 a.m., please call and inform the director.
- We plan for your child to attend every day that he/she is scheduled. Therefore, if your child is going to absent from school, please call the office by am. **THERE ARE NO MAKE-UP DAYS FOR ABSENCES.**
- In the event that your child is absent for two consecutive weeks, without proper notification to the office, the child will be considered withdrawn from the program and the reserved classroom space will be filled. All tuition and any related charges are due and payable during this two-week period. To re-enroll, normal registration/supply fees will apply.
- If your child becomes sick with a communicable disease listed in this handbook, you must have a doctor's note stating that your child may return to school, before he can resume attendance in the program.
- There are **NO TUITION ADJUSTMENTS DUE TO ABSENCE OR FAMILY VACATIONS.**
- ***Full time students are required to pay tuition every Friday before the close of the business day.*** Minds of the Future Academy reserves the right to terminate child care services at any time, with or without cause. Child care services may be terminated for willful destruction of property, if the child poses a threat to the safety and welfare of other children in care, physical or verbal abuse by the parent towards the center staff, insufficient funds that are not repaid promptly, or refusal to follow center policies. Two weeks written notice is requested from parents so that we can adequately plan our teacher to student ratios. Any past due balances are due on last day of enrollment. Balances remaining after 30 days will be referred to the center's collection agency.
- You will accumulate one week of vacation after being enrolled a year within the academy.
- If your child becomes ill tuition is still required and there will be no credits or refunds given.
- You are required to sign your child into the center on the center parent sign in sheet located in the office. You must ensure your child is in the care of center staff before exiting the center.
- Parents are requested to notify the director is a child will not be in attendance that day. This notification will assist us to more effectively maintain appropriate child staff ratios.

Expulsion Policy

Unfortunately, there are sometimes reasons we have to expel a child from our program either on a short term or permanent basis. We want you to know that we will do everything possible to work with the family of the child(ren) in order to prevent this policy from being enforced. The following are reasons we may have to expel or suspend a child from this academy:

- The child is at risk of causing serious injury to other children or him/herself.
- Parent threatens physical or intimidating actions towards staff members.
- Parents exhibits verbal abuse to staff in front of enrolled children.
- Failure to pay/habitual lateness in payments.
- Failure to complete required forms including the child's immunization records
- Habitual tardiness when picking up your child. Verbal abuse to staff.
- Failure of child to adjust after a reasonable amount of time.
- Uncontrollable tantrums/angry outbursts.
- Ongoing physical or verbal abuse to staff or other children.
- Excessive biting.

Minds of the Future Academy

Behavior Management and Discipline Policy

The forms of discipline used at our facility are:

1. Positive redirection
2. Positive reinforcement
3. Time-out away from the group
4. Parent conference to ask for help with child's behavior
5. Suspension for 1 to 2 days
6. Termination from facility

We praise good behavior and encourage the child to make acceptable choices at all times. We use time-out or time-away from the group to help a child to calm down. If your child cannot/will not calm down, we will call you immediately to come to remove your child from the facility. **We will not allow constant disruptions or outbursts.** It is not fair to the other children to have a classmate who constantly disrupts the class by yelling, fighting, destroying class materials or being overly aggressive toward others. If your child's behavior is beyond his/her control we will suggest appropriate agencies for your child's behavioral management.

The forms of discipline used for the toddlers (under two) are positive redirection and positive reinforcement. Redirecting a toddler to another activity or another toy will usually solve the conflict.

School-aged children are expected to follow and obey the rules of our center. We do not allow inappropriate touching, fighting, destruction of property, stealing, throwing food or toys.

Discipline will not be associated with food, rest, or toileting. Spanking or any form of physical punishment is prohibited.